

REMARKS

Claims 2, 10 and 18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 2, 10 and 18 are amended. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Cabrera during the March 22, 2006, personal interview, are gratefully appreciated. The reasons presented in the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants record of the interview.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 2, 10 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Inui et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,204,821) and Andrade et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0109950) and further in view of Akihiro (JP 11312197). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the personal interview, none of the applied references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a parts procurement system that includes a virtual production line and correction means for correcting the virtual production line, wherein the correction means changes the virtual production line by correcting at least one parameter out of a production sequence change or a production progress, as recited in independent claim 2 and similarly recited in independent claims 10 and 18.

The Office Action admits that Inui and Andrade fail to disclose or suggest "some limitations" of claims 2, 10 and 18 (Office Action, page 3, lines 13-14). The limitations not disclosed by Inui and Andrade are the correction means and the way in which they correct the virtual production line.

Moreover, Akihiro teaches a system to easily generate, correct and change a schedule plan by deciding the delivery required days of respective subunits from read times by means of each word process (Problem to be Solved). Moreover, as asserted by the Office Action (Office Action, page 4, lines 8-9), Akihiro teaches changing scheduling of the delivery need day of each subunit from a change in the lead time (paragraph [0060]). Moreover, the Office Action also asserts that Akihiro teaches changing scheduling by modification of the lead time only when the subunit itself is changed at the time of a design change (paragraphs [0019] and [0065]).

Accordingly, Akihiro teaches changing scheduling based on a lead time and based on changes in the lead time that are due to design change, but not based on at least one of a production sequence change or a production progress, as recited in independent claims 2, 10 and 18. Furthermore, Inui and Andrade fail to cure deficiencies in Akihiro in disclosing or rendering obvious this feature.

Thus, a combination of the applied references would not arrive at the subject matter of independent claims 2, 10 and 18. Accordingly, independent claims 2, 10 and 18 are patentable over the applied references. As such, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 2, 10 and 18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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